

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

- 1 Claim 1 (currently amended): A computer-implemented method
2 comprising:
- 3 a) encoding, with a computer system including at least one
4 computer, ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of an ad and
5 including the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties in a
6 click URL, wherein the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad
7 properties include ~~[[information indicating how the ad was
8 selected as a candidate for serving]]~~ all of (A) a topic or
9 concept associated with a Web page with which the ad was
10 served, (B) a time the ad was served or rendered, (C)
11 information about other ads that were rendered along with
12 the ad, (D) a geolocation to which the ad was served, (E)
13 an identity of a server that chose the ad, and (F) a
14 digital signature generated based on the other ad
15 properties included in the click URL;
- 16 b) serving, with the computer system, the ad together with
17 the click URL;
- 18 c) in response to a user selection of the ad,
19 i) decoding, with the computer system, the ~~[[one or
20 more]]~~ encoded ad properties at an intermediate URL
21 server, and
22 ii) forwarding, with the computer system, a content
23 rendering facility of the user to an ad landing page;
24 and
- 25 d) using the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties to
26 perform, with the computer system, at least one of (1)
27 tracking the performance of the ad and (2) determining
28 advertiser charges for serving the ad.

Claims 2 and 3 (canceled)

1 Claim 4 (currently amended): The computer-implemented method of
2 claim 1 wherein the act of encoding ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad
3 properties represents the encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties
4 with characters from a set of K characters, where K is no more
5 than 72.

1 Claim 5 (previously presented): The computer-implemented method
2 of claim 4 wherein K is 64.

1 Claim 6 (previously presented): The computer-implemented method
2 of claim 4 wherein K is 32.

1 Claim 7 (previously presented): The computer-implemented method
2 of claim 4 wherein K is 16.

1 Claim 8 (currently amended): The computer-implemented method of
2 claim 1 wherein the encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties are
3 represented with a set of K characters, and wherein the set of K
4 characters excludes one or more characters selected from a set
5 of characters consisting of "control" "space" "<" ">" and "%".

1 Claim 9 (currently amended): The computer-implemented method of
2 claim 1 wherein the encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties are
3 represented with a set of K characters, and wherein the set of K
4 characters excludes one or more characters selected from a set
5 of characters consisting of "{" "}" "|" "\" "^" "[" and "]".

1 Claim 10 (currently amended): A computer-implemented method
2 comprising:

3 a) encoding, with a computer system including at least one
4 computer, ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of an ad and
5 including the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties in a
6 click URL, wherein the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad
7 properties include ~~[[at least one of (1) information~~
8 ~~indicating how the ad was served, (2) information~~
9 ~~indicating advertiser charges, and (3) information~~
10 ~~indicating how the ad was selected as a candidate for~~
11 ~~serving]]~~ all of (A) a topic or concept associated with a
12 Web page with which the ad was served, (B) a time the ad
13 was served or rendered, (C) information about other ads
14 that were rendered along with the ad, (D) a geolocation to
15 which the ad was served, (E) an identity of a server that
16 chose the ad, and (F) a digital signature generated based
17 on the other ad properties included in the click URL;
18 b) serving, with the computer system, the ad together with
19 the click URL;
20 c) in response to a user selection of the ad,
21 i) decoding, with the computer system, the ~~[[one or~~
22 ~~more]]~~ encoded ad properties at an intermediate URL
23 server, and
24 ii) forwarding, with the computer system, a content
25 rendering facility of the user to an ad landing page;
26 and
27 d) using the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties to
28 perform, with the computer system, at least one of (1)
29 tracking the performance of the ad and (2) determining
30 advertiser charges for serving the ad,
31 wherein the act of encoding the ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad
32 properties of the ad and including the ~~[[one or more]]~~
33 encoded ad properties in the click URL includes:

- 34 (1) representing, with the computer system, each of
35 the ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of the ad with a
36 binary value;
- 37 (2) concatenating, with the computer system, each of
38 the ~~[[one or more]]~~ binary values to define a sequence
39 of bits;
- 40 (3) encoding, with the computer system, the sequence
41 of bits into a sequence of characters, wherein each of
42 the characters is selected from a set of K legal
43 characters; and
- 44 (4) providing, with the computer system, the sequence
45 of characters in the click URL of the ad.

Claims 11-18 (canceled)

- 1 Claim 19 (previously presented): The computer-implemented
2 method of claim 10 wherein the act of encoding the sequence of
3 bits into a sequence of characters includes
- 4 i) dividing, with the computer system, a number
5 defined by the sequence of bits by K to obtain a
6 result and a remainder,
- 7 ii) selecting, with the computer system, one of the K
8 legal characters using the remainder,
- 9 iii) setting, with the computer system, the number to
10 the result, and
- 11 iv) repeating acts (i)-(iii) until the result is less
12 than K.

- 1 Claim 20 (currently amended): Apparatus comprising:
2 one or more processors;
3 at least one input device; and

4 one or more storage devices storing processor-executable
5 instructions which, when executed by one or more
6 processors, perform a method of:

- 7 a) encoding ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of an ad
8 and including the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad
9 properties in a click URL, wherein the ~~[[one or more]]~~
10 encoded ad properties include ~~[[information indicating~~
11 ~~how the ad was selected as a candidate for serving]]~~
12 all of (A) a topic or concept associated with a Web
13 page with which the ad was served, (B) a time the ad
14 was served or rendered, (C) information about other
15 ads that were rendered along with the ad, (D) a
16 geolocation to which the ad was served, (E) an
17 identity of a server that chose the ad, and (F) a
18 digital signature generated based on the other ad
19 properties included in the click URL;
20 b) serving the ad together with the click URL;
21 c) in response to a user selection of the ad,
22 i) decoding the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad
23 properties at an intermediate URL server, and
24 ii) forwarding a content rendering facility of
25 the user to an ad landing page; and
26 d) using the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties to
27 perform, with the computer system, at least one of (1)
28 tracking the performance of the ad and (2) determining
29 advertiser charges for serving the ad.

Claim 21 and 22 (canceled)

1 Claim 23 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 20 wherein
2 the act of encoding ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties represents the

3 encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties with characters from a set
4 of K characters, where K is no more than 72.

1 Claim 24 (original): The apparatus of claim 23 wherein K is 64.

1 Claim 25 (original): The apparatus of claim 23 wherein K is 32.

1 Claim 26 (original): The apparatus of claim 23 wherein K is 16.

1 Claim 27 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 20 wherein
2 the encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties are represented with a
3 set of K characters, and wherein the set of K characters
4 excludes one or more characters selected from a set of
5 characters consisting of "control" "space" "<" ">" and "%".

1 Claim 28 (currently amended): The apparatus of claim 20 wherein
2 the encoded ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties are represented with a
3 set of K characters, and wherein the set of K characters
4 excludes one or more characters selected from a set of
5 characters consisting of "{" "}" "|" "\" "^" "[" and "]".

1 Claim 29 (currently amended): Apparatus comprising:
2 one or more processors;
3 at least one input device; and
4 one or more storage devices storing processor-executable
5 instructions which, when executed by one or more
6 processors, perform a method of:
7 a) encoding ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of an ad
8 and including the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad
9 properties in a click URL, wherein the ~~[[one or more]]~~
10 encoded ad properties include ~~[[at least one of (1)~~
11 ~~information indicating how the ad was served, (2)~~

~~information indicating advertiser charges, and (3) information indicating how the ad was selected as a candidate for serving]]~~ all of (A) a topic or concept associated with a Web page with which the ad was served, (B) a time the ad was served or rendered, (C) information about other ads that were rendered along with the ad, (D) a geolocation to which the ad was served, (E) an identity of a server that chose the ad, and (F) a digital signature generated based on the other ad properties included in the click URL;

b) serving the ad together with the click URL;

c) in response to a user selection of the ad,

 i) decoding the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties at an intermediate URL server, and

 ii) forwarding a content rendering facility of the user to an ad landing page; and

d) using the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties to perform, with the computer system, at least one of (1) tracking the performance of the ad and (2) determining advertiser charges for serving the ad,

 wherein the act of encoding the ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of the ad and including the ~~[[one or more]]~~ encoded ad properties in the click URL includes:

 (1) representing each of the ~~[[one or more]]~~ ad properties of the ad with a binary value;

 (2) concatenating each of the ~~[[one or more]]~~ binary values to define a sequence of bits;

 (3) encoding the sequence of bits into a sequence of characters, wherein each of the

44 characters is selected from a set of K legal
45 characters; and
46 (4) providing the sequence of characters in
47 the click URL of the ad.

Claims 30-37 (canceled)

1 Claim 38 (previously presented): The apparatus of claim 29
2 wherein the act of encoding the sequence of bits into a sequence
3 of characters includes
4 i) dividing a number defined by the sequence of bits
5 by K to obtain a result and a remainder,
6 ii) selecting one of the K legal characters using the
7 remainder,
8 iii) setting the number to the result, and
9 iv) repeating acts (i)-(iii) until the result is less
10 than K.

Claims 39-42 (canceled)